



Fact Sheet

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Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)

What is Hib?	Haemophilus influenza is a family of bacteria. Haemophilus influenza type B (also called HIB) is the most dangerous member of this family. Before the introduction of the HIB vaccine in 1988, HIB was a leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children. HIB also causes ear infections, sinus infections and pneumonia in children.
What are the symptoms?	Symptoms of infections depend of the location of the infection. Fever is usually present. If HIB meningitis causes fever, headache, stiff neck, irritability, sleepiness and other symptoms. Other symptoms may include cough, ear ache and conjunctivitis.
How is it treated?	HIB is a bacteria and can be treated with antibiotics. Early treatment in HIB meningitis increases the likelihood of recovery. However, as many as 10 percent of HIB meningitis patients may die. Most people with other HIB infections recover with antibiotic treatment.
How do people catch this disease?	Hib is spread from person to person primarily by airborne respiratory droplets. The disease is only moderately contagious. However, the risk increases with close contact in households, daycare centers and other group settings.
What can be done to stop the spread of this disease?	The Hib vaccine provides protection against the disease. Hib vaccine is given at 2 months, 4 months and 6 months of age. Another dose is given between 12 and 15 months of age. Most children over 5 years of age do not need additional doses of HIB vaccine. Some children and adults with particular medical problems need additional doses of HIB vaccine. It is also a requirement to attend day care or school in South Carolina. Since the widespread use of the Hib vaccine in the late 1980's, the number of HIB meningitis cases in the United States have decreased by 99%.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Region 7

Serving Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties

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